

## REPORT

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**SUPPLEMENT TO  
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**THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION**

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1. In a meeting on 19 April 1955, the employees of the USIA retail stores division (ORT) in the Muehlviertel, Upper Austria, were briefed on the current planning concerning the USIA retail stores after the signing of the Austrian State Treaty. Alois Wipplinger, the ORT inspector in the Muehlviertel area, explained to the group that ORT does not include former German property and therefore does not fall in the same category as other USIA enterprises which would be returned to Austria after the signing of the state treaty.<sup>1</sup> He said that ORT is a Soviet firm with a relatively independent status within the USIA administration, that it is directly responsible to the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Trade.<sup>2</sup>

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3. Subsequent to the announcement of the Austrian State Treaty agreements in Moscow, the sales turnover in USIA retail stores increased in some instances by as much as 80 percent. One store attained a daily turnover of 100,000 Austrian schillings, whereas the peak for the same store during the Christmas season had only been 70,000 schillings. The strongest selling items were non-perishable goods such as rugs, cameras and bicycles.
4. It has been arithmetically estimated that the total sales turnover of the 120 USIA retail store outlets in Austria during 1954 was between 982 million and one billion Austrian schillings.

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2 Comment. All of USIA is responsible, through GUSINZ, to the Soviet Minister of Foreign Trade. 25X1

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